DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

THE NEED OF INCREASED CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY.

Fishermen Were Chosen Because They Were Brave and Hardy—The Boundless Sea of God's Word—Do Not Hug the Shore, but Sail Out Boldly.

At the Tabernacle.

Since his return from Europe Dr. Talmage has faced audiences unusually large and enthusiastic, who are attracted to the Tabernacle no less by the potent eloquence of the preacher than through a desire to hear from his own lips the message of thanks intrusted to him by the Czar to the contributors of The Christian Herald famine cargo, which he and Mr. Klopsch conveyed to Russia in the steamer Lee. It is understood that Dr. Talmage has in preparation a full account of the mission to Russia, as well as of his own preaching tour to Germany, England, Scotland and Ireland. The text last Sunday morning was taken from Luke v, 4, "Launch out into the deep."

Christ, starting on the campaign of the world's conquest, was selecting his staff officers. There were plenty of students with high foreheads, and white hands, and intellectual faces, and refined tastes in Rome and Jerusalem. Christ might have called into the apostleship twelve bookworms, or twelve rhetoricians, or twelve artists. Instead He takes a group of men who had never made a speech; never taken a lesson in belles-lettres; never been sick enough to make them book delicacies—their hands broad, clumsy and hard knuckled. He chose fishermen, among other reasons, I think, because they were physically hardy. Rowing makes strong arms and stout chests. Much climbing of ratlines makes one's head steady. A Galilee tempest wrestled men into gymnasts.

The open work of the church was rough work. Christ did not want twelve invalids hanging about Him complaining all the time how badly they felt. He leaves the delicate students in Jerusalem and Rome for their mothers and aunts to take care of, and goes down to the seashore and out of the toughest material makes an apostleship. The ministry need more corporeal vizor than any other class. Fine minds and good intentions are important, but there must be physical force to back them. The intellectual mill wheel may be well built and the grist good, but there must be enough blood in the mill race to turn the one and to grind the other.

He chose fishermen also because they were used to hard knocks. The man who cannot stand assault is not fit for the ministry. It always has been and always will be rough work, and the man who, at every censure or caricature, sits down to cry had better be at some other work. It is no place for ecclesiastical doll babies. A man who cannot preach because he has forgotten his manuscript or lost his spectacles ought not to preach at all. Heaven deliver the church from a ministry that preach in kid gloves and from sermons in black morocco covers! These fishermen were rough and ready. They had been in the severest of all colleges.

When they were knocked over by the main boom of the ship they entered the Sophomore; when washed off by a great wave they entered the Junior; when floating for two days without food or drink on a plank they came to the Senior, and when at last their ship dashed on the beach in a midnight hurricane they graduated with the first honor.

My text finds Jesus on shipboard with one of these bronzed men — Simon by name. This fisherman had been sweeping his net in shoal water. "Push out," says Christ. "What is the use of hugging the shore in this boat? Here is a lake twelve miles long and six wide, and it is all populated—just waiting for the sweep of your net. Launch out it into the deep."

The advice that my Lord gave to Simon is as appropriate for us all in a spiritual sense. The fact is that most of us are just paddling along the shore. We are afraid to venture out into the great deeps of God and Christian experience. We think that the boat will tie upset, or that we cannot "clew down the mizzen topsail," and our cowardice makes us poor fishermen. I think I hear the voice of Christ commanding us, as He did Simon on that day when bright Galilee, set in among the green hills of Palestine, like water flashing in an emerald cup, "Launch out into the deep."

This divine counsel comes first to all those who are paddling in the margin of Bible research. My father read the Bible through three times after he was 80 years of age, and without spectacles —not for the mere purpose of saying he had been through it so often, but for his eternal profit. John Colby, the brother-in-law of Daniel Webster, learned to read after he was 84 years of age, in order that he might become acquainted with the Scriptures. There is no book in the world that demands so much of our attention as the Bible. Yet nine-tenths of our Christian men get no more than ankle deep. They think it is a good sign not to venture too far. They never ask how or why, and if they see some Christian becoming inquisitive about the deep things of God they say, "Be careful; you had better not go out so far from shore."

My answer is: The farther you go from shore the better, if you have the right kind of ship. If you have mere worldly philosophy for the hulk and pride for a sail and self-conceit for the helm, the first squall will destroy you. But if you take the Bible for your craft the farther you go the better, and after you have gone 10,000 furlongs Christ will still command, "Launch out into the deep." Ask some such question as, "Who is God?" and go on for ten years asking it. Ask it at the gate of every parable; amid the excitement of every miracle; by the solitariness of every patriarchal threshing floor; amid the white faces of Sennacherib's slain turned upon into the moonlight; amid the flying chariots of the Golden City.

Ask who Jesus is, and keep on asking it of every Bible lily, of every raven, of every star, of every crazed brain cured, of every blind man come to sunlight, of every coin in a dish's mouth, of every loaf that got to be five loaves, of every wrathful sea pacified, of every paiseless arm stretched forth in gratulation; ask it of His mother, of Augustus, of Herod, of the Syrophœnician woman, of the damsel that woke up from the death sleep, of Joseph who had Him buried, of the angel posted as sentinel at His tomb, of the dumb earth that shook and groaned and thundered when He died.

A missionary in France offered a Bible to an humble dwelling. The man took it, tore out a dozen pages, and with them began to light his pipe. Some years after the missionary happened in the same house. The family had just lost their son in the Crimean war, and his Bible had been sent home. The missionary took it up and saw that it was the very same Bible that he left in the house, and from which the leaves had been torn. The dying soldier had written on one of the leaves of the Bible, "Rejected and scoffed at, but finally believed in and saved." The Bible may be used to light the pipe of witticism by some, but for us it is a staff in life, a pillow in death and our joy for eternity.

Walk up and down this Bible domain. Try every path. Plunge in at the prophecies and come out at the epistles. Go with the patriarchs until you meet the evangelists. Rummage and ransack, as children who are not satisfied when they come to a new house until they know what is in every room and into what every door opens. Open every jewel casket. Examine the skylights. Forever be asking questions. Put to a higher use than was intended the oriental proverb, "Hold all the skirts of their mantle extended when Heaven is raining gold."

Passing from Bonn to Coblentz on the Rhine the scenery is comparatively tame. But from Coblentz to Mayence it is enchanting. You sit on deck and feel as if this last flash of beauty must exhaust the scene; but in a moment there is a turn of the river which covers up the former view with more luxuriant vineyards, and more defiant castles, and bolder bluffs, vine wreathed, and grapes so ripe that if the hills be touched they would bleed their rich life away into the bowls of Bingen and Hockheimer. Here and there there are streams of water melting into the river, like smaller joys swallowed in the bosom of a great gladness.

And when night begins to throw its black mantle over the shoulder of the hills, and you are approaching disembarkation for Mayence, the lights along the shore lend to bewitch the scene with their beauty, giving one a thrill that he feels but once, yet that lasts him forever. So this river of God's Word is not a straight stream, but a winding splendor—at every turn new wonders to attract, still riper vintage pressing to the brink, and crowded with castles of strength (Stolzenfels and Johannisberger as nothing compared with the strong tower into which the righteous run and are saved), and our disembarkation at last, in the evening, amid the lights that gleam from the shore of Heaven. The trouble is that the vast majority of Bible voyages stop at Coblentz, where the chief glories begin.

The sea of God's Word is not like Gennesaret, twelve miles by six, but boundless, and in one direction you can sail on forever. Why then confine yourself to a short psalm or to a few verses of the epistle? The largest fish are not near the shore. Hoist all sail to the winds of Heaven. Take hold of both oars and pull away. Be like some of the whalers that went out from New Bedford or Portsmouth to be gone for two or three years. Yea, calculate on a lifetime voyage. You do not want to land until you land in Heaven. Sail away, O ye mariners, for eternity! Launch out into the deep!

The text is appropriate to all Christians of shallow experience. Doubts and fears have in our day been almost elected to the parliament of Christian graces. Some consider it a bad sign not to have any doubts. Doubts and fears are not signs of health, but festers and carbuncles. You have a valuable house or farm. It is suggested that the title is not good. You employ counsel. You have the deeds examined. You search the record for mortgages, judgments and liens. You are not satisfied until you have a certificate, signed by the great seal of the state, assuring you that the title is good. Yet how many leave their title to Heaven an undecided matter! Why do you not go to the records and find out? Give yourself no rest, day or night, until you can read your title clear to mansions in the skies.

Christian character is to come up to higher standards. We have only to run through our library to find one Robert M'Cheyne, or one Edward Payson, or one Harlan Page. The time will come when we will find half a dozen of them sitting in the same seat with us. The grace of God can make a great deal better men than those I have mentioned. Christians seem afraid they will get heterodox by going too far. They do not believe in Christian perfection. There is no danger of your being perfect for some time yet. I will keep watch, and give you notice in time if you get too near perfection for the safety of your theology.

One half of you Christians are simply stuck in the mud. Why not cut loose from everything but God? Give not to Him that formal petition, made up of "O's"—"O Lord" this and "O Lord" that. When people are cold and have nothing to say to God they strew their prayers with "O's" and "Forever and ever, Amen," and things to fill up. Tell God what you want with the feeling that He is ready to give it, and believe that you will receive, and you shall have it. Shed that cold, cruel prayer to make room for making these ten years. It is high time that you outgrew it. Throw it aside with your old ledgers, and your old hats, and your old shoes. Take a review of your present wants, of your present sins and of your present blessings. With a sharp blade cut away your past half and half Christian life, and with new determination, and new plans, and new expectations launch out into the deep.

The text is appropriate to all who are engaged in Christian work. The church of God has been fishing along the shore. We set our net in a good, calm place and in sight of a fine chapel, and we go down every Sunday to see if the fish have been wise enough to come into our net. We might learn something from that boy with his hook and line. He throws his line from the bridge—no fish. He sits down on a log—no fish. He stands in the sunlight and casts the line, but no fish. He goes up by the mill dam and stands behind the bank, where the fish cannot see him, and he has hardly dropped the hook before the cork goes under. The fish come to him as fast as he can throw them ashore.

In other words, in our Christian work, why do we not go where the fish are? It is not so easy to catch souls in church, for they know that we are trying to take them. If you can throw your line out into the world where they are not expecting you, they will be captured. Is it fair to take men by such stratagem? Yes. I would like to cheat five thousand souls into the kingdom.

The text is appropriate to all the unforgiven. Every sinner would come to God if he thought that he might come just as he is. People talk as though the pardon of God were a narrow river, like the Kennebec or the Thames, and that their sin draws too much water to enter it. No; it is not a river nor a bay, but a sea. I should like to persuade you to launch out into the great deep of God's mercy. I am a merchant. I have bought a cargo of spices in India. I have, through a bill of exchange, paid for the whole cargo. You are a ship captain. I give you the orders and say, "Bring me those spices." You land in India. You go to the trader and say, "Here are the orders," and you find everything all right. You do not stop to pay the money yourself. It is not your business to pay it. The arrangements were made before you started. So Christ purchases your pardon. He puts the papers or the promises into your hand. Is it wise to stop and say, "I cannot pay for my redemption?" God does not ask you to pay. Relying on what has been done, launch out into the deep.

The Bible's promises join hands, and the circle they make will compass all you sins, and all your temptations, and all your sorrows. The round table of King Arthur and his knights had room for only thirteen banqueters, but the round table of God's supply is large enough for all the present inhabitants of earth and Heaven to sit at, and for the still mightier populations that are yet to be.

Do not sail coastwise along your old habits and old sins. Keep clear of the shore. Go out where the water is deepest. Oh, for the mid sea of God's mercy! "He it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins." I preach it with as much confidence to the 80-year-old transgressor as to the maiden. Though your sins were blood red they shall be snow white. The more ragged the prodigal, the more compassionate the father.

Do you say that you are too bad? The high water mark of God's pardon is higher than all your transgressions. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

Do you say that your heart is hard? Suppose it were ten times harder. Do you say that your iniquity is long continued? Suppose it were ten times longer. Do you say that your crimes are black? Suppose that they were ten times blacker. Is there any lion that this Samson cannot slay? Is there any fortress that this Conqueror cannot take? Is there any sin this Redeemer cannot pardon?

It is said that when Charlemange's host was overpowered by the Christian army of the Saracens in the pass of Roncesvalles, his warrior, Roland, in terrible earnestness, seized a trumpet and blew it with such terrific strength that the opposing army reeled back with terror, but at the third blast of the trumpet it broke in two. I see your soul fiercely assailed by all the powers of earth and hell. I put the mightier trumpet of the Gospel to my lips and I blow it three times. Blast the first—"Whosoever will, let him come." Blast the second—"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found." Blast the third—"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

Does not the host of your sins fall back? But the trumpet does not, like that of Roland, break in two. As it was handed on to us from the lips of our fathers, we hand it down to the lips of our children and tell them to sound it when we are dead, that all the generations of men may know that our God is a pardoning God—a sympathetic God—a loving God—and that more to Him than the anthems of Heaven; more to Him than the throne on which He sits; more to Him than are the temples of celestial worship is the joy of seeing the wanderer putting his hand on the door latch of his father's house. Hear it, all ye nations! Bread for the worst hunger. Medicine for the worst sickness. Light for the thickest darkness. Harbor for the worst storm.

Dr. Prime, in his book of wonderful interest entitled "Around the World," describes a tomb in India of marvelous architecture. Twenty thousand men were twenty-two years in erecting that and the buildings around it. Standing in that tomb, if you speak or sing, after you have ceased you hear the echo coming from a height of one hundred and fifty feet. It is not like other echos. The sound is drawn out in sweet prolongation, as though the angels of God were chanting on the wing. How many souls in the tomb of sin will lift up the voice of penitence and prayer? If now they would cry unto God the echo would drop from afar—not struck from the marble cupola of an earthly mausoleum, but sounding back from the warm heart of angels, filled with the news, for there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth!

Winning, Yet Failing.

All of us cannot do everything. Yet a man who triumphs over obstacles that bar his way to success should be able to conquer himself. Defeat on that battle-field means ultimate failure. The life of Hector Berlioz, one of the most eminent of French musicians, illustrates the fact that the greater the necessity for self-control.

He forced his way to distinction against resolute opposition at home. His father, who had destined him to the medical profession, and his mother, who, being a devout Catholic, imagined that association with musicians would be fatal to his religion, refused assent to his desire to study music. The father at length withdrew all support.

But young Hector obtained a position as chorister, at a salary of ten dollars a month. Joining another musical student, who had a similar sum, they lived on six dollars a month, and used the remainder of their funds in their musical studies. His improvement was rapid, and he soon won a brilliant reputation, and acquired a position in the front rank of the great French musicians.

But while he had an indomitable will to surmount obstacles, like many other men of genius, he had no control over himself, and his life was full of moral failures. If he had ruled himself as vigorously as he conquered external difficulties, he might have been a great and beneficent leader in society.

The lesson holds true not only of Berlioz but many minor masters of art. A public life has a strange tendency towards enervating pursuits and pleasures.—*Youth's Companion.*

The following anecdote of President Lincoln is related by General Badeau: "Sheridan started before daybreak in pursuit of what was left of Lee's army. He sent word to Grant: 'If the thing is pressed, I think that Lee will surrender.' Grant forwarded the dispatch and an account of the victory to Lincoln, at City Point, and the President replied: 'Let the thing be pressed.'"

A YOUNG man named Bartholomew Benjamin Stuart Iverson Jones, recently went west to make a name for himself.

DIDN'T KNOW HOW FAR.

And According To His Way of Thinking It Made No Difference, Anyhow.

We left Manchester, the county seat of Clay, Ky., one morning about sunrise, for a ride to Willow Fork, some miles up country. After proceeding some distance the heat became oppressive. Halting under the shade of a friendly tree, we dismounted and threw ourselves upon the ground for a short rest. We had not been there long before we observed an old forester, seated in a breakdown wagon, driving leisurely down the road.

With the customary politeness of people in these parts, as he reached us he said:

"Mornin', suhs."

"Good morning." I replied. And as he was proceeding on his way I asked:

"Can you tell us how many miles it is to Willow Fork?"

"Whoa, Jonas! No, suh, I can't."

"Don't you live in this neighborhood?"

"Yes, suh."

"And do you not know the distance to Willow Fork?"

"No, suh. Never hearn."

"But you have some idea of the distance?"

"Nope. I've lived round these hyar parts for nigh onter fifty year, an' I never gave hit a thought. Never knew how far hit was. Never wanted to know. When I hed to go thar I jist driv on 'till I brought up."

"Well, that is strange," I said, laughing. "I should think that after living around here all that time you would be able to give the distance to a foot."

"Not so strange when you think of hit, mister," he replied. "What's diffrunce how fur hit is? If ye've got ter git thar, an' if ye know the road hit's all right. Ye've got ter drive on till ye bring up," he added, philosophically. "Gite-a-up, Jonas!"

"Yes, you're about right," I remarked, as he drove on.

He had not proceeded far when he suddenly halted, and, turning around, came driving slowly back to where we were seated.

"Wanter go to ther Fork, mister?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied.

"Why in thunder didn't ye say so?"

"I thought you understood that?"

"No, I didn't. Ye jist asked me how many miles hit war, an' I said I didn't know, nor I didn't. But if ye wanter git to ther Fork jist drive on 'til ye cum to a red house with about twelve young 'uns playin' in ther road in frunt uv hit—that's my place. An' after ye reach that ye've got ter go 'bout as fur agin, and then ye'll see the steeple of ther Fork Church. Foller that an' ye'll bring up."

"Thank you," I replied.

"Sutinly, that's all right, suh, I don't look fer hit. Ye oughter say allus whut ye want. I don't know how fur hit is, but ye'll bring up if ye foller up this road till ye see that steeple. Git-e-up, Jonas!"

And wheeling around he drove slowly away.—New York Herald.

An Ignorant General.

Gen. Macard was completely ignorant, which sometimes caused great amusement to the better educated officers under his command.

One day one of these came to ask leave to go into the neighboring town to order himself a pair of boots.

"Bless me," said the General, "that will suit well; as you are going to the shoemaker, just come here and take my measure and order me a pair too."

The officer, much surprised, replied that he could not take his measure, as never having been a shoemaker, he had not the least idea how to set about it.

"What!" cried the General, "I sometimes see you pass whole days looking at mountains, penciling and drawing lines, and when I ask you what you are doing, you answer that you are measuring the mountains; well, if you can measure objects miles away from you, what do you mean by telling me that you cannot take my measure for a pair of boots when you have got me under your hand! Come, take my measure without any more ado!"

The officer assured him that it was impossible; the general insisted and got angry, and it was only with great difficulty that other officers, attracted by the noise, succeeded in bringing this ridiculous scene to an end. The General never would understand how an officer who measured the mountains could be unable to measure a man for a pair of boots.

Effects of Injuries

A delicate woman will sometimes survive injuries that would lay out your six-footer. A large number of those people who live to a ripe old age have one foot in the grave from their very infancy, while others, who are perfect paragons of health and strength, are swept away by the first breath of disease. I was sitting in my office one day when a drunken day laborer walked in, swinging one arm with the hand of the other. It had been cut off by an engine, and he picked it up and walked unassisted to my office for repairs. That same day I was sent for to attend a man who had a finger-nail crushed off and was lying in a dead faint. I was once called on by a hotel porter who had a hole as large as a half dollar crushed in his skull by a slung-shot. I dressed the wound and he went to a dance that night and thrashed the fellow who had slugged him. The wound which scarce discommoded him, would have proved fatal to nineteen men out of twenty.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

AROUND A GREAT STATE.

BRIEF COMPILATION OF ILLINOIS NEWS.

Mr. Stokes and the Confidence Men—Passed the Night in the Clouds—Mrs. Yates Seriously Hurt—Dived at an Engine.

From Far and Near.

ALEXANDER HUGHES, a police magistrate and constable of Williamsville, was killed while attempting to cross the track in front of the Chicago & Alton limited train.

DAVID CODE, at Ringold mill, shot his wife, killing her, and then shot himself, causing death in about an hour. They had been separated on account of cruelty on the part of the husband.

AT Vandalia the trial of Charles Chandler for the killing of John Frailey at Avena, in a political quarrel, resulted in a verdict of manslaughter. Punishment was fixed at three years in the penitentiary at Chester.

AT a conference of the Quincy Public School Board and prominent Catholic and Lutheran citizens it was decided to raise the barrier against the parochial school children and allow them to celebrate Columbian day with the public school children. This action assures a big demonstration on that day.

MRS. CATHERINE YATES, of Jacksonville, wife of ex-Governor Yates, was thrown from her vehicle while driving. The horse was frightened at one of the electric cars and became fractious. The vehicle was backed into one of the cars, which was running very rapidly, and demolished. Mrs. Yates was thrown to the ground and besides other injuries she sustained a fracture of one of her arms.

AN unidentified man committed suicide at Edwardsville crossing in a peculiarly horrible manner. He was walking beside the "Big Four" track, and, as the Alton express came dashing along, he stepped on the track, folded his arms, and prepared for death. The train was only a few yards away, and, just as the engine bore down on him, he sprang head first at it like a person would in diving. He was instantly killed.

A STRANGER went to the residence of E. B. Stokes, one of the largest land owners of Fayette County, and induced him to drive to Vandalia to see about a land deal. Mr. Stokes drew $5,000 out of the bank, and he and the stranger started back. Darkness overtook them, and about one mile from Ramsey a confederate of the man with Mr. Stokes came upon the scene, and the two men forcibly took Stokes' money, and, throwing him out of the buggy, made their escape.

PROF. IVY BALDWIN, the Quincy aeronaut, and Col. Franklin Eugene Brown, editor of the Quincy Herald, made a remarkable ascension in the new white airship Mars. They left Quincy at 5 o'clock Thursday afternoon and remained all night in the clouds. During the journey they passed over the cities of Keokuk, Fort Madison, Montrose, West Point, and Burlington, Iowa; Carter, Mo.; and Carthage, Galesburg and Monmouth, Ill., landing at 10 o'clock Friday morning four miles from Biggsville. The journey was a record breaker in many particulars. They attained the altitude of four and one-half miles and traversed Iowa and Illinois at a speed exceeding sixty miles an hour. The landing was a perilous one, made without anchor or ballast.

THE weather crop bulletin says: The temperature of the past week has been much above a seasonable average throughout the State. At Springfield the daily excess was over eight degrees, and at Cairo seven degrees. On the morning of the 26th light frost occurred in several counties, doing slight damage to corn on low ground. Generally clear weather prevailed during the week, except in a few of the extreme northern counties. The acreage of wheat promises to be as large as that of last season. In the southern counties no rain has fallen for several weeks, and the ground is in very poor condition, retarding plowing. It is thought that, unless rain soon comes, the acreage of wheat sown will be less than last year. Pastures are also in need of rain throughout the State, some of them being reported drying up. Stock water is getting very scarce.

AT Springfield a very wonderful phenomenon was observed in the heavens Tuesday evening about 6:50 o'clock. Those who saw it declare that a bright body, resembling in size and brilliancy a good-sized star, was seen moving with astonishing rapidity toward the moon, which it struck with tremendous force, and seemed to burst like a bomb, darkening its light for an instant. The scientifically inclined explain it by saying a large meteor or comet came within the power of the moon's attraction and fell into it just as thousands of such bodies fall into the earth every day. At 8:30 o'clock the same night many Chicago people on the West Side saw an exceedingly large meteor shoot out of the sky to the northeast, and describing the circle of its course by a flaming ball of fire, after the manner of a fireball, disappear among the houses in the neighborhood of Union Park. Those who saw it said that it traveled with great swiftness, and was the largest that any of them had ever seen.

OTIS HUNTER, a young farmer living near Illiopolis, was kicked to death by a horse.

AT Illiopolis William A. Bois' 8-year-old daughter was burned to death while playing near a burning brush pile.

AT Duquoin, a daughter of G. J. Haines while playing with matches, set fire to her clothing, which was burned from her body. She died the next morning.

THE suicide of John Platt at Mascoutah, will not interfere with the trial of Edward Fredericks, who inflicted injuries upon the former's head, rendering him insane.

GOV. FIFER has pardoned Winfield Reeves, convicted of larceny at the January term of the Cook County Criminal Court. The prisoner is in the last stages of consumption.

THE Frally-Chandler murder trial was commenced in Vandalia. Chandler and Frally were brothers-in-law, the former being a Democrat and the latter a Republican. Both men had agreed to support Weaver for President. A dispute over the matter resulted in murder.

AT Rock Island, the house of George Saunders, foreman of the Staudia shoe factory, was burglarized while the family were at church, and $100 in money and many articles of value taken. It was the boldest robbery perpetrated in the city in years, and the police are amazed and helpless.

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